The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and official interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1126, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918. Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912.

GIVE TO FIGHT HEART DISEASE

WHOLE NO. 1976 WILLIAM GREEN, *President* WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1949 GEORGE MEANY, *Secretary-Treasurer* VOL. 39, NO. 8

America's Housing Needs

By RICHARD J. GRAY,
President, AFL Building and Construction Trades Department.

This is the first of a series of articles on legislative action to meet America's housing needs based on the testimony presented by Richard J. Gray, president of the AFL Building and Construction Trades Department, before the Housing Subcommittee of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee.

For many years, and particularly since the war, the AFL has urged upon Congress the prime necessity of a comprehensive national housing program, one which would meet the needs of all the American families. Because of our dual interest in solving the housing shortage—as representatives both of the 2,000,000 workers employed by the construction industry and of 7,500,000 workers interested in comfortable sanitary living quarters—we had hoped that such a program would have been launched long before the present time. We were extremely disappointed when the 79th and 80th Congresses failed to act. Legislation would have made it entirely possible the inauguration of a housing program for all of the people.

In the last two previous sessions of Congress we submitted housing legislation means that now, three and one-half years after V-J Day, the nation is still confronted with an acute housing shortage. I will not repeat the detailed statistics which you have heard so many times describing the extent of the housing shortage. It is now well-known that we should be building homes at the rate of 1,500,000 units a year if we are to lick the housing shortage within the next decade.

Last year under the most favorable circumstances the private building industry was able to construct only about 925,000 units. This is less than two-thirds the number of homes which should have been built during 1948. Every forecast for 1949 is for even fewer privately constructed homes. By this record the private building industry has shown itself incapable of housing the American people.

Even more alarming than the deficiency in the number of new homes is the fact that comparatively few new homes are being built which are built for sale or rent at prices average families can afford to pay. In many communities in all parts of the country there are virtually no homes for sale at less than $10,000.

With selling prices of new homes at such terrifically high levels, we feel that it is both economically unsound and grossly unfair to encourage low-income or even moderate-income families to invest their life savings in new homes. Therefore, the primary need at the present time is for rental housing. Yet only about 12 percent of the homes started in 1948 are so-called "rental-type" dwellings, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The percentage for 1949 is expected to be only slightly higher.

Moreover, the few rental units which are being constructed are being offered at rents far above what most families can afford to pay. According to reports received late in 1948 by the Housing Expediter from over 1,000 new and towns in all of the 48 states, the average monthly rent of newly constructed apartments was $118.66. Clearly, we have been devoting our time and energies building housing for the relatively high income groups.

Figures for family income, recently reported by the Bureau of Census, indicate that in 1947 more than a fifth of all families had incomes of less than $2,000 and that another one-fifth had incomes between $2,000 and $4,000. These families are simply unable to buy or rent the homes now being constructed by private builders. They can hardly be comprehensive housing program to meet the needs of this 60 percent of the nation's families.

We feel that the only way to provide adequate housing for this lowest income brackets is through an extensive low-rent public housing program. During the last 15 years the membership of the AFT has multiplied more than five times.

2. There are now AFT locals in all of the 25 largest cities of the United States except one.

3. There are now AFT locals in three-fourths of the cities of the United States over 100,000 population.

4. In the predominantly agricultural states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kentucky and Missouri, there are locals in approximately 75 percent of the counties.

5. There are approximately 300 locals in cities of less than 100,000 population.

7. In the city of Chicago approximately two-thirds of the teachers of the city belong to the Chicago Teachers Union and the membership is increasing rapidly. This powerful union played a large part in cleaning up the political situation in the public schools of Chicago.

8. A large and constantly increasing number of AFT locals now represent a large majority of the teachers in their respective cities. In a substantial number of cities the membership in the AFT locals is 100 percent or nearly so.

9. Recently several superintendents of schools in smaller school districts, discouraged because of the ineffectiveness of their administration and dissatisfied with the dictatorship often exerted by political cliques in the teachers' associations, have appealed to the AFT to organize the teachers for the good of the schools and for more functional professionalism. These school administrators see the crisis in education resulting from the fact that teachers were not organized with sufficient professional strength to protect the schools and the rights of the teachers.

10. The effectiveness of strong teachers' unions is graphically indicated by the fact that during the last decade not a single local union of the AFT was defeated—which had built up a strong, well-organized union, has voted to sever its affiliation with the AFT.

Pictured above is modern housing project under construction at Roubaix, France, to be occupied by French workers.

C. F. MILLER,
Editor, AFL Weekly News Service

Roubaix, France.—Labor-management cooperation in this city in northern France is providing new, modern homes for textile workers and their families, to the observer, stands out head and shoulders above the gloomy housing picture for the nation.

To date some 200 dwelling units have been occupied, 800 are under construction and 40 more will be started as soon as weather permits.

Units are of 2 basic types, the apartment house variety and multiple family homes. They are of up-to-date design, sunlight, well, and of the average contain 4 rooms and bath. They are attractively spaced on large tracts of ground to permit ample light and air and to give each family some outdoor living area.

The project compares favorably with similar developments in the United States. For France, however, it represents a great advance over the majority of living quarters for workers. The bathroom is a bath and central heating for each family is still a luxury here. In the old sections of the city, where are built of the working population live, it is not unusual for several families to use one outside toilet among them. Modern heating facilities are unknown to the majority of these families. The new homes are clustered together into one solid wall of masonry with narrow entrances. Occasionally a narrow walkway leads to a small courtyard in the rear of the dwelling which serves as the only outside living area for a group of families.

This modern housing project is the result of cooperative efforts on the part of an employers association and two democratic labor federations. Preliminary plans for the project were made during the war while France was under German occupation. Upon liberation of the area by Allied troops, the organizations set up jointly a separate agency known as the Inter-Professional Committee for Housing to handle the operation. The president of the committee is an employer while the post of treasurer is filled by a union representative. The director of operations for the group is a paid staff member who has had long experience in the textile field.

The cost of the project is financed in part by contributions of the employers amounting to 2 percent of their payrolls. Additional sums are borrowed from the French government over a 60-year period.

Allocation of the new homes is made by a special committee composed of labor and management representatives. Rental for apartments amounts to 2,000 francs a month ($5 for the average worker) roughly 10 percent of the income of a French worker with 2 children. Provisions are being made to allow workers to buy their homes as soon as he is in a position to do so. In the event a worker leaves the employ of a firm belonging to the association and is transferred to the project he will be put forced to give up the dwelling.

Ultimate goal of the housing committee is the erection of 15,000 dwelling units over a period of from 15 to 20 years. It is estimated that this will require about 15 percent of the existing quarters in the area.

To American workers the $6.25 monthly rental for modern housing seems so low as to be near the point of absurdity. In France, however, this sum is roughly 2 times the national average paid for rent. According to figures made available by the ECA mission to this nation, the average worker spends about 8 percent of his income for rent, or roughly the same amount he spends for tobacco.

This phenomenon is due to a strict rent control law which has kept rents down while other living costs have skyrocketed. The law applies only to workers who remain in the same quarters they have been occupying. If a worker moves, it is almost impossible for him to find quarters which he can afford.

New Labor Radio Station To Start in N.Y. in April

By ARNOLD BEICHMAN,
New York Correspondent, AFL Weekly News Service

New York City.—The first labor-owned radio station in the metropolitan area, one dedicated to the memory of President Roosevelt, will open officially on April 1st from transmitters on the Empire State Building. Union. The station, which will broadcast on an FM frequency, will be called WFDR.

It will be located in the heart of the city's radio district and will utilize the vacated FM studios of WOR, the New York outlet of the Mutual Broadcasting System, which is building another station in New Jersey.

Under a license granted by the Federal Communications Commission, the ILGWU will nationally has 50 percent of the station's stock, while New York unions, among them Local 802, American Federation of Musicians; the Bell, Cigar and Millinery Workers Unions and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, will purchase the remaining shares.

M. S. Novik, radio director of Labor's League for Political Education during the presidential campaign and ILGWU radio consultant, said the New York labor-owned station would "serve the public" and "promotions affecting the people."

"The programs will not be just union programs. They will try to do a community job, will try to show the contributions which labor has made to the community and to the nation in its everyday activities. Where a union has an important contribution which should be brought to the public, the facilities of WFDR will be available. Where an organization with a laudable purpose needs community support, the station's facilities will be at its disposal.

Although the station will seek commercial sponsorship up to a maximum of 50 percent of the broadcast time, it will be operated on a nonprofit basis with profits going back into furthering the station's development.

"Trade unions should turn more and more," said Mr. Novik, "to radio for public relations. Radio should not be neglected. Unions ought to take advantage of this medium to make widely known their activities and thereby build greater sympathetic understanding.

"The station will present debates, forums, round-table discussions on controversial issues, although it will not sell time on a commercial basis for such events. Organizations will be free to use their private programs, although time will be available on a sustaining basis.

"Labor unions have definitely assumed a role in public affairs which lent it steers on such a competitive field as radio. Programming must include a balanced and complete analysis of news, serving the nation's people and must also be responsive to the nation's needs.

"A labor station must be a community station. It must develop and encourage local talent and local groups, further public education and hold forums with emphasis on public discussions."

Growth of Teachers Union Told in Kuenzli Report

By IRVIN R. KUENZLI,
Secretary-Treasurer, American Federation of Teachers

Washington, D. C.—In the following report to AFL President William Green, Irvin R. Kuenzli, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers, describes the encouraging growth and expansion of that organization in graphic terms:

1. The membership of the AFT has doubled since the beginning of World War II despite the heavy losses in the armed forces, war industry, and the general exodus of teachers from the profession. During the period of World War I and the post-war period the AFT has likewise one of the most rapidly growing white collar unions in the world.

6. During the last 15 years the membership of the AFT has multiplied more than five times.

Modern Housing Project To Help French Workers

Union Forces Management to Grant Wage Increase by Novel Court Action

By PAT FRAYNE
West Coast Correspondent for AFL News Service

San Francisco.—A little-used provision of California's civil code seems to be a wedge to gain wage increases for 1800 members of the Hospital and Institutional Workers Union, AFL, of this city.

The use of the civil courts for the enforcement of a labor contract is believed to be a first new step in negotiations—at a time when negotiations were at a standstill.

Starting last July, Jimmy Murphy, executive secretary of the Hospital and Institutional Workers Union, began his negotiations with the San Francisco Hospitals Conference, but no agreement developed after several months.

The Hospitals Conference declared that a wage dispute was not a dispute with the union, through Murphy asked for arbitration of demands. At this point the union asked for a $20 a month increase across the board. The management with a proposal for $19 a month increase for culinary workers and $15 a month for non-culinary workers. Management sat pat with a proposal for $5 for culinary and $10 for non-culinary employees.

"Management invited us to strike," stated Murphy. "We did not want to have a no-strike clause in our contract so refused to be baited into a walkout. We felt that we were being forced into an untenable spot and that public opinion would certainly be against a strike against the folks who were patients in hospitals."

So the case of Murphy vs. the San Francisco Hospitals Conference was carried into superior court by Attorney Francis McCarty under a section of the civil code on contracts.

Management's attorneys contended in court that a wage dispute could not be arbitrated, but the contract was enforceable. The court ruled that all disputes could be arbitrated. The civil code provides that the terms of agreement between employer and employee may be enforced after notice to the court for enforcement.

Judge Edward P. Murphy of San Francisco's superior court ruled that the San Francisco Hospital Conference must negotiate with the union. In answer to the ruling the Conference started an appeal which lasted on the court until the first of the year when the attorneys for management had a change of heart.

The appeal by management was withdrawn and the case dismissed and the union sat down and began negotiations.

The union's compromise of $10 for culinary workers (which includes three meals a day) and $15 for non-culinary workers as well as a monthly wage raise. The new pay scale was retroactive to September 1, 1948, with the contract extended to June 30, 1949.

"I believe this is the first time the union has gone to court to enforce a contract," says Jimmy Murphy, "At least it is the first time that it was carried through to a judge's opinion. It is a novel procedure and a precedent for other unions to consider."

N. Y. STRIKE LOSS LOW

Albany, N. Y.—In 1948, for the eighth consecutive year, New York State compiled a better record than the rest of the country concerning work stoppages, according to Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi. Working time lost because of stoppages in the state was proportionately 50 percent less than the national average.

Truman Sees No Danger In "Leveling-off" of Prices

Medical Association Hit For Fighting Health Plan

Washington, D. C.—The Committee for the Nation's Health declared that the American Medical Association was trying to hide its opposition to national health insurance behind "a fancy press-relations job."

In a broadside published on the association's widely publicized 12-point health program, the committee asserted that it was "designed to obscure the AMA's stubborn opposition by any program which would bring medical care within the means of the average man."

"The AMA's only proposal for meeting that national problem is the same as before—voluntary health insurance," the committee statement said. "It has not moved an inch on this basic issue, despite all the window dressing."

The statement on behalf of the committee, which is supporting the drive for enactment of the Truman administration's national health insurance program, was made by its chairman, Dr. Channing Frothingham of Boston. The committee is made up of prominent business, professional and labor figures including David Sarnoff, Gerard Swope, Eleanor Roosevelt, William Green and Mrs. Albert D. Lasker.

The AMA program, the committee said, has proved to be "inadequate" and "costly." Frothingham, who has twice been president of the Massachusetts Medical Society, said:

"People in the AMA fear the effect of government health programs in order to head off compulsory insurance, the voluntary medical insurance plans favored by the AMA cover less than a sixth of the population and offer only limited protection. They are either wholly controlled by the AMA's state and local medical societies or are merely cash benefits paying a fraction of medical costs through insurance companies."

U. S. Backs AFL Charges in UN Council Against Slave Labor Camps in Russia

Lake Success, N. Y.—The United States charged that the Soviet Union operates throw a searching spotlight on Russia's slave labor camps, which it was charged, 8,000,000 to 14,000,000 persons, all chains and locked in cells in tragic numbers.

In one of the most acid denunciations delivered before the world organization's Economic and Social Council, the United States delegate, Willard L. Thorp, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, accused the Soviet Union of hiding deplorable facts on slave labor conditions behind a thick curtain of secrecy, and followed up this charge with a broader one alleging that Communist regimes in the Soviet satellite states had brought in their wake a return to practices of slave labor that were similar to those abolished a century ago.

The sharp attack by Mr. Thorp came after the council took up for discussion the charges by the AFL Federation of Labor's long insistence on an investigation of forced labor in Eastern European countries.

Peter Fleming, AFL representative, appealed to the 18-nation council for international action to abolish slave labor camps.

Presenting a series of specific cases to the council, Fleming documented the AFL's charges that the Soviet Union is using slave labor camps, in violation of the Soviet Union's own constitution, which guarantees to the people the basic rights of human decency do everything in order to come to the assistance of those who are suffering helplessly and are being murdered."

The 60-page document of testimony submitted by the AFL presented the individual affidavits of oppression, torture and slave labor practices as practices and death in large numbers, as told by former inmates of the labor camps. Among those whose cases are cited are that of Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, a former chaplain of the Polish Army, a former member of the Soviet Red army, an editor and a Buddhist bishop of the Kalmuk region.

Most of the stories were grimly reminiscent of the Nazi concentration camp atrocities.

One of the testimonials, signed by Gennadi Khomyakov, told, for example, how in one camp, on Solovetsky Island's punitive "isolator" camp, a prisoner who was being punished in winter time would be given buckets and ordered to go barefoot and fetch water from the lake.

The road to the lake led over a staircase of 275 steps covered with ice, and the prisoner would go down, fill the buckets at an opening cut into the ice and start climbing back.

His freezing feet, according to Mr. Khomyakov, would turn into stumps that soon he could not move, and the prisoner would fall and spill the water. Then he would be ordered to return and re-fill the buckets. Most of these workers froze to death eventually at the foot of the staircase.

Rejecting angrily to the accusations of the U. S. State Department and the AFL, Soviet delegate Semyon K. Tsarapkin called them "slanderous." But let this country send military spies into Russia, he demonstrated the AFL as a "lackey union" and emphasized that because of this the Soviet Union "is completely forbidden to haters of the USSR."

Christopher P. Mayhew, of Britain, also attacked the Soviet Union's practice as being "no reply whatever. The British delegate urged the council to bring the United States and other countries into line instead of replying "tit-for-tat" to the slave-labor charges against his country, was tantamount to a "public admission of guilt," the British diplomat declared.

Costa Rican President Thanks Green For Aid in Resisting Totalitarianism

Washington, D. C.—Jose Figueres, president of the Republic of Costa Rica, conveyed thanks of his nation to the AFL and to William Green for the moral support given by the AFL during the recent crisis in Costa Rica by totalitarian elements.

Confederation of Workers expressed his appreciation to Serafino Romualdi the AFL, and Anthony E. Matt, president of the International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers, during a visit which they made to Costa Rica at the invitation of the Confederation of Workers.

The Costa Rican chief executive referred to a telegram sent by Mr. Green to the Organization of American States urging action by that body to safeguard the integrity and democratic institutions of the threatened country. The AFL acted upon the request of the Anti-Communist Labor Confederation of Costa Rica which is affiliated with the Inter-American Confederation of Workers.

Mr. Romualdi reported that gratitude for the AFL's action in defending the rights of the small nation was felt by all of the democratic elements accorded him and Mr. Matt. They were given a luncheon and banquet by the Confederation of Labor and were guests at an official reception in addition to the reception tendered them by President Figueres.

PLUMBERS' LOCAL FOUNDS BLOOD BANK FOR CHILDREN

New York City—Local 2, United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry, a member of the New York City Central Labor Council, has established a blood bank for children of members and their families.

The recommendation for the project was made by Thomas J. Kelley, chairman of the New York City Central Labor Council, the union, numbering 5,000 members, in Manhattan and the Bronx, will name the blood bank in Father Kelley's honor.

UNION HITS CARDINAL'S TRIAL

Chicago.—In a resolution adopted unanimously by 1,400 members of Local 136, Chicago Journeymen Plumbers, the trial and conviction of Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary are called "a blow aimed at all the clergy of all denominations."

PAPERHANGERS' LOCAL MARKS 49TH ANNIVERSARY

Evansville, Ind.—Paperhangers Local 464 recently celebrated its 49th anniversary with a banquet for members of the organization in honor of Rudolph Clemens and Herbert Harns are the only two remaining on the membership roll.

The union is today one of 10 strictly-paperhanger locals in the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America was negotiated by Charles Geise in 1900.

COOPERS TO HOLD CONVENTION

Boston.—The 29th general convention of the Coopers International of North America will open April 4 in the Hotel Melbourne, St. Louis. The official call for the convention was issued by President James J. Doyle and the union's executive board.

Employment Off Again While Price Drops Are Spotty

Washington, D. C.—President Truman declared at a press conference at the White House that he saw nothing in the present business situation to cause alarm.

Current price declines in some consumer products constitute the leveling-off that everyone has been looking for, the President said. He added that the leveling-off would not be another upward spiral in prices.

The President's remarks, to reporters were followed by another White House statement by Edwin G. Nourse, chief economic adviser to Truman, who termed the business situation as one of "disinflation" that was economically healthy unless the public became "jittery."

"Disinflation," Dr. Nourse explained, meant taking pressure off inflation whereas "deflation" might mean a general collapse. The government's aim now, he added, was to achieve a workable set of price relationships before the end of August, but above the general level of the prewar years.

Meanwhile, a "more than seasonal" drop in employment between mid-December and mid-January was announced by Ewan Clague, commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Labor Department. However, this drop does not mean that the nation no longer is enjoying a full employment era, he said.

The drop in the 3,000,000 out of work would be "a good guess" at the present time, Commissioner Clague said, the mid-January total having been 2,- 900,000. Clague said that the figures "are low as it could get" in this country's peacetime economy, subject to sudden industry changes which throw people out of work.

Not until unemployment reaches a total of around 4,000,000 to 5,000,000, "sustained for some time," would there be an unemployment problem which requires action, he said.

The employment drop in non-farm industries at the turn of the year, Dec. 15 to Jan. 15, was 1,750,000 workers.

Mr. Clague said that this drop should be viewed in the light of 3 important factors:

1) The employment in December, 1948, was highest in history for December and every month of 1948 in comparison with the 11 months shown up at the time. These figures cover civilian employment in the year 1947.

2) The December-to-January drop was mostly seasonal, such as happens in all years, with post-Christmas cutoffs of workers in trade and postal services.

3) The downturn in January, which was "somewhat more than seasonal," when analyzed, shows up as "small and select," hitting mostly the manufacturing industries.

The commissioner attributed the drop in manufacturing, which he termed a continuing trend, to a "leveling up on the scarcities" from a post-war employment high of 16,- 000,000 workers. Textile employment jobs have declined in each of the past 12 months to a figure of 1,047,000 in January.

The exact size and significance of the "more than seasonal" drop cannot be determined until April, when seasonal employment is on the upward curve again, Mr. Clague said. If the comeback has "verve and vigor," he said, any current talk of a depression trend will have been proved unfounded. If the normal seasonal upturn is "dampened down," it will indicate that there is more than is cause for concern over a possible unemployment trend.

Meanwhile, a nation-wide survey of prices in the food, clothing and shelter items that constitute the cost-of-living index, compiled by chief living costs, undertaken by the New York Times, indicates that declines have been "moderate and spotty." The survey indicates a trend of downtrend, clothing prices "softening," but that the cost of shelter is the average consumer's standard of living "has not changed," and that while others, like fuel and light bills, have even gone up.

AFL TO PRESENT SERIES TOPICAL RADIO SHOWS

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor, on Washington's Birthday, will present four weekly radio forums on the AFL's national affairs over the NBC network on important issues of national and international concern.

The series is to be discussed each Sunday at 1 p.m. on the NBC network. Plans for certain to consult your local newspaper for the exact time of broadcasts of "America United" in your community, because in some cities the programs are rebroadcast at a later hour or date.

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

SUPPLEMENT

GIVE TO FIGHT HEART DISEASE

WILLIAM GREEN, *President* — WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1949 — GEORGE MEANY, *Secretary-Treasurer*

Homes For Workers' Families

By RICHARD GRAY
President, AFL Building and Construction Trades Department

This is the second of a series of articles on legislative action to meet America's housing needs based on Mr. Gray's testimony before the Housing subcommittee of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee.

Two-fifths of our families have incomes between $2,000 and $4,000. We know that the average factory worker earns about $55 per week, and if he is forced to pay more than $50 to a month for housing, he would have to curtail very seriously other expenditures essential for decent family living.

These families are not eligible for admission to low-rent public housing projects. They are unable to buy or rent the new houses or apartments which are being built today. We are convinced that in order to bring housing within the reach of these middle-income families, savings must be sought in carrying charges, profits, and operating and maintenance expenses rather than by a reduction of living quarters and a lowering of construction standards. Therefore, we heartily endorse the principle established in Title I of S. 724 which would make available new aids for housing these middle-income families.

The program which S. 724 would establish provides for direct federal loans for large-scale rental and cooperative housing at the going federal interest rate (now 2¾ percent), plus one-half of 1 percent to cover the cost of administration, for an amortization period covering the useful life of the new dwelling, but not to exceed 60 years. These loans would be made available, to (1) mutual ownership or cooperative ownership housing corporations; (2) nonprofit corporations; (3) limited dividend or other housing corporations restricted by law, regulations, or contract so as to conform to requirements of this title with respect to rents, charges, rate of return, and methods of operation.

The entire program would be placed under a new Housing Loan Administration within the Housing Agency. We endorse the Housing Agency's statement that because the success of this program is of such paramount importance that it requires the creation of a separate administrative unit.

We estimate that the maximum monthly rents for units constructed under this program can be reduced to as low as $50 to $60 per month, depending upon the size of the dwelling unit. This would be achieved principally through (1) lowering construction costs through lower interest rate and longer amortization period; (2) by limiting any return on profit over and above the interest rate to cooperatives and other nonprofit groups; (3) by an extremely low excess rate schedule for public housing projects; (4) by drastically reducing operating and maintenance expenses through avoiding luxury services to tenants and arranging for a certain amount of tenant maintenance.

We believe that still further reductions might be obtained by eliminating the charge of one-half of 1 percent covering the cost of administration of the program. This administrative cost can be a simple addition to the appropriation, similar to that provided by other comparable programs of the federal government which operate at the present time at what the money actually costs the government, which at the present time would be about 2 percent. We also believe that consideration might be given to further reduction of costs by granting partial or complete tax exemption to cooperative and other nonprofit housing projects established under this program.

Although we welcome this program provided for by S. 724, we feel that the funds authorized for loans under this program are entirely inadequate. We estimate that the $500,000,000 per year made available for a period of 4 years would permit the building of only 60,000 units per year during each of the next 4 years. This will not even begin to meet the needs of the millions of middle-income families who are unable to secure decent housing today. We therefore strongly urge that the program should at least be doubled to allow the construction of at least 120,000 units each year under this program.

Italy Emerging From Chaos

By C. F. MILLER,
Editor, AFL Weekly News Service

Rome—In this crisis country of Europe, torn politically and economically, devastated in the east and faced with a surplus population, the Italian economy is slowly getting itself with Marshall Plan aid from the United States.

This fact was brought out in interviews with ECA officials here and subsequently confirmed by leaders of the anti-Communist unions, which are engaged in a life or death battle with the Communist-controlled General Confederation of Labor.

The net effect of the ERP program was summed up neatly by Giulio Pastore, responsible director of the newly formed Free General Confederation of Labor, who said:

"Without ERP assistance Italy would be lost. It has saved the Italian economy. By January 1, 1950, we will be on our own feet. We will not be forced to beg for raw materials, the Marshall Plan has kept both our people and factories going."

There is no question over the validity of this statement. In the 9 months since the ECA Mission to Italy set up shop and started doing business the reinvigoration of the Italian economy has been checked and the industrial machine has begun to turn out a greater flow of goods. A satisfactory beginning has been made on the long, hard task which faces the new Italian government as it nears the first anniversary of free, democratic government in this land in over 20 years. It is fairly obvious, however, that the progress so far is only a beginning. Chaos has been averted, but confusion persists.

The government is relatively weak since it depends for its existence upon upon a delicate balance between the various political parties of which it is composed. The standard of living for the vast bulk of Italy's 48,000,000 people is extremely low. Workers face the threat in this land of great contrast in economic and social position. An Italian worker can never hope to buy the automobile which he produces out of what he can be earns. The excess of population and the consequent unemployment which is estimated at about 1,750,000 makes labor chary about making gains in their efforts to improve the lot of the workers, Italy's treasury system was completely wrecked during the war as was every part of industry, and much of her housing. On top of all this the Communists are carrying on steady and ruthless pressure on the government and its supporters in an effort to bring rule on the nation.

It is against this background that ECA is working in an effort to bring some semblance of orderly progress in Italy's economic life. What evidence is there to back up the statement that substantial progress has in fact been made?

First, hunger for millions of Italians has been averted through the import of food and agricultural products. As of the end of 1948, a total of $393,900,000 of ECA funds was authorized for the import of necessary foodstuffs, mostly bread grains. Expenditures for this purpose is expected to decrease in the future as Italy's own agricultural output steps up under a program being sponsored by the Italian government. Under this program $120,000,000 is being spent for reclamation and irrigation projects, for the introduction of scientific farming methods, and for credit aids to small farmers. The funds which cover the period ending June 30 will also be used to repair 120,000 rooms in the homes of houses in the area to be reclaimed or irrigated, comprising 2,500,000 acres.

Secondly, the output of Italian industry has been increasing slowly but surely. The flow of raw materials and machinery imports financed out of ECA funds. Industrial production, as measured by an index, stood at a level 1 point higher than in 1938. The level last October was 17 points above the 1947 production rate. Exports in 1948 showed a phenomenal rise of 34 percent over the previous year. As a result Italy's trade deficit has been reduced.

In the field of employment, it is difficult to find any tangible benefit brought by ECA aid because of the ever-growing unemployment which is caused by the surplus of population over the manpower which the Italian economy is able to absorb. It is safe to say that without ECA assistance unemployment would be substantially higher than the 2,000,000 level.

In an effort to alleviate the problems caused by an excess in the nation's labor force, ECA officials are being used for the retraining of workers to make them acceptable workers in other countries where there is a shortage of labor.

A specific example of the type of assistance the Italian economy is receiving from the Marshall Plan aid was found in the refinery in the city of Leghorn. This facility, which employs 1,000 workers, operates exclusively with crude oil imported into Italy under the ERP program. The refinery was built by the Italian government with its own funds, but it would stand idle were it not for the constant flow of crude oil which it receives. Credits have been enabled to operate because of ERP has in turn kept automobiles and trucks on the highways; has provided the basic motive power needed for industry; and has in no small degree enabled the Italian industrial machine to accomplish what it has in the way of reconstruction. Reconstruction of the refinery is an aspect of the program also which, while multiplied many times, gives a true picture of what the ERP is doing for Italy.

EMPLOYE BIRTHDAYS NOW HOLIDAYS IN NEW CONTRACT

Philadelphia, Pa.—Something new has been added to a labor union contract—each employe gets his birthday off with pay or gets double pay if he works.

The provision, found in Local 169, Warehouse Employes Union, an AFL teamsters' affiliate, said a contract with such a provision had been signed with the Keystone Brass & Rubber Company. The local has 50

AFL 'Visiting Professors' To Tell School Union Side

Newark, N. J.—American Federation of Labor officials will serve as "visiting professors" in a one-week educational experiment intended to give Newark high school seniors the "unvarnished truth about unions."

The AFL Essex county trades council said the project had the support of Dr. John R. Morrison, superintendent of schools, and other school officials, as well as of William Green, AFL president. The Newark labor group expressed the hope that the experiment would be extended to all high schools in this city and that it would be copied throughout the country.

The experiment will be carried on during the week of Feb. 28 among seniors at the Barringer High School. Fifty minutes of each period, excepting preliminary instruction in special classes being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Morrison University and the local school.

Each high school session will start with a 20-minute lecture by the AFL "professor," followed by 25 minutes of group discussion.

Topics for discussion will include: "American Labor's Struggle Through the Years," "Why Labor Unions Are Necessary," "Collective Bargaining," "Causes of Strikes," "Labor Legislation on State and National Levels" and "Labor as an Asset to the Community, State and Nation."

The labor instructors will give 7 classes a day on each of 5 days. The project will be introduced with a talk by Mark Starr, educational director of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, at a student assembly Feb. 25. Another assembly will be held March 7, at which 2 union representatives and 2 students will sum up the discussions of the preceding week.

Europe Needs Skilled, Trained Labor, Shishkin Informs House Committee

Washington, D. C.—The production goals in European Recovery Program can be met only if qualified, trained labor is made available in addition to materials, equipment and plants, Boris Shishkin, director of ECA's European labor division, said.

The AFL economist on leave made this statement in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee shortly before going to Paris as headquarters of ECA in Europe.

Mr. Shishkin said:

"Labor supply in the ERP countries has been thrown out of balance by the war and the disruption in its wake. While in some of the countries labor is scarce in a number of industries strategic to recovery, there is unemployment in other countries widespread enough to be a serious drain on their economic strength. Unemployment in Italy and Austria is heavy. Displaced persons and political refugees, concentrated largely in western Germany, are jobless and hope to find productive employment and economic security elsewhere. Farmers and workers have been uprooted by the civil war in Greece are without a livelihood.

"Closest cooperation among the participating countries is necessary to their mutual effort are needed to bring into balance the flow of labor supply so unevenly distributed among them. While any of the participating countries is labor short, age in one industry may be found to alongside a labor surplus in another. current."

Lack of housing and absence of adequate transportation have been the most important obstacles to the movement of labor. Other needs are effective and placement services need to be coordinated and strengthened in some of the countries and employment services of ECA need to be better coordinated closely.

The ECA has pursued the development of an orderly program which would meet these needs and achieve balanced employment for the workers of Europe at the highest attainable level. A vigorous start has already been made in the tasks so far called upon the member countries to coordinate their employment services. Work has been begun on a thorough survey and analysis of the development of uniform job classifications. Pilot programs of industrial training have been mapped out by the OEEC and technical assistance provided for them by the ILO and the ECA. A similar assistance has been made with the IRO and the participating countries of possibilities to resettle displaced persons to areas where they can be productively employed. Productivity problems have been studied and training programs for interchanges of skills and expert advice among participating countries are already under way in some of the fields. While much of the work is still ahead, the tools have been forged with which the problems of recovery can be effectively tackled by a joint effort of the countries concerned.

AFL Convention Calendar

(Following is a list of conventions scheduled for this year by National and International Unions and State Federations of Labor under the banner of the American Federation of Labor. This list is not final or complete. Additions will be announced later.)

Date	Organization	Place
Mar. 21	Office Employes Intl. Union	St. Louis, Mo.
Mar. 21	Brotherhood of Paper Makers	Cincinnati, Ohio
Mar. 21	Seafarers Intl. Union of N. A.	Baltimore, Md.
April 4	Coopers Intl. Union of N. A.	St. Louis, Mo.
April 4	Florida State Federation of Labor	Lakeland, Fla.
April 4	Louisiana State Federation of Labor	Shreveport, La.
April 4	Retail and Bakery Drivers	Chicago, Ill.
May	Associated Actors and Artists of America	New York, N. Y.
May 2	Intl. Brotherhood of Bookbinders	Montreal, Can.
May 2	United Wall Paper Craftsmen, etc.	Niagara Falls, N.Y.
May 2	Tennessee State Federation of Labor	Chattanooga, Tenn.
May 9	Laundry Workers Intl. Union	Chicago, Ill.
May 9	Iowa State Federation of Labor	Fort Dodge, Iowa
May 13	Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor	Harrisburg, Pa.
May 13	Kansas State Federation of Labor	Topeka, Kans.
May 16	Arkansas State Federation of Labor	Little Rock, Ark.
May 16	Michigan State Federation of Labor	Jackson, Mich.
May 16	Missouri State Federation of Labor	Jefferson City, Mo.
May 16	Virginia State Federation of Labor	Richmond, Va.
May 18	Georgia State Federation of Labor	Columbus, Ga.
May 22	Intl. Union of Elevator Constructors	Green City, Md.
May 23	Intl. Ladies Handbag, Luggage, etc.	Atlantic City, N. J.
May 25	Intl. Association of Bridgemen	Washington, D. C.
June 4	South Dakota State Federation of Labor	Rapid City, S. D.
June 6	The Order of Railway Conductors	Lakeside, Pa.
June 19	Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Emp.	Detroit, Mich.
June 20	Canada and Gen. Conf.	Vancouver, B. C.
June 20	Oregon State Federation of Labor	Eugene, Ore.
June 20	Texas State Federation of Labor	Beaumont, Texas
June 20	Intl. Plate Printers, etc.	Ottawa, Can.
June 27	South Carolina State Federation of Labor	Spartanburg, S. C.
July 11	Washington State Federation of Labor	Spokane, Wash.
July 18	Intl. Stereotypers and Elec., etc.	Los Angeles, Calif.
Aug. 1	Radio Broadcast Employes	Chicago, Ill.
Aug. 8	North Carolina State Federation of Labor	Charlotte, N. C.
Aug. 15	International Typographical Union	Oakland, Calif.
Aug. 15	California State Federation of Labor	Los Angeles, Calif.
Aug. 15	Utah State Federation of Labor	Logan, Utah
Aug. 15	Wisconsin State Federation of Labor	Eau Claire, Wis.
Aug. 15	International Photo Engravers, etc.	Columbus, Ohio
Aug. 22	American Federation of Teachers	Milwaukee, Wis.
Aug. 29	West Virginia State Federation of Labor	Parkersburg, W.V.
Sept. 4	Intl. Assn. of Marble, Slate, etc.	Buffalo, N. Y.
Sept. 5	Hotel, Restaurant Emp. and Bar.	Fargo, N. D.
Sept. 5	New Jersey State Federation of Labor	Atlantic City, N. J.
Sept. 6	Mississippi State Federation of Labor	Gulfport, Miss.
Sept. 6	Arizona State Federation of Labor	Undecided
Sept. 6	Nebraska State Federation of Labor	North Platte, Neb.
Sept. 11	Intl. Chemical Workers	Montreal, Can.
Sept. 12	Intl. Union of Elec., Wire, etc.	Los Angeles, Calif.
Sept. 12	Intl. Union of Metal Polishers, etc.	Rochester, N. Y.
Sept. 12	Assn. Assn. of Street and Elec., etc.	Pittsburgh, Pa.
Sept. 16	Nevada State Federation of Labor	Las Vegas, Nev.
Sept. 18	Minnesota State Federation of Labor	Undecided
Sept. 19	The Commercial Telegraphers, etc.	Montreal, Can.
Sept. 19	Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks	Springfield, Ill.
Sept. 26	Metal Trades Department	St. Paul, Minn.
Sept. 26	Union Label Trades Department	St. Paul, Minn.
Oct. 7	New Mexico State Federation of Labor	Albuquerque, N. M.
Oct. 24	Kentucky State Federation of Labor	Louisville, Ky.
Oct. 17	Railway Mail Association	Omaha, Neb.
Dec. 1	Intl. Union of Journeymen Horse, etc.	Arcadia, Calif.

* Date not definitely set.

T-H Repeal Nears Showdown; Anti-Labor Coalition Looms

Truman Hits 'Die-hards' Blocking Liberal Laws

Washington, D. C.—President Truman, in a slashing attack against "die-hard reactionaries," accused them of trying to cripple labor unions and thwart his entire program of progressive social legislation.

In his Jackson Day dinner address here, the President threatened to stump through the country to force Congressional enactment of his campaign pledges if obstructionists in the special interest continues.

Mr. Truman emphatically repeated his support of the entire Democratic platform, with special stress on repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, which he said, "cut deeply into the working rights of women of this country."

The special interests, he said, "are using every trick they can think of to defeat our labor policy," but he warned that they could not succeed because "all the crying in the world will not stop the march of a good law."

Discussing a hitting at Senator Robert Taft of Ohio, the President continued:

"The same die-hard reactionaries who want to cripple labor unions have also started a campaign of confusion against all our other measures for the welfare of the people. They say they are for housing and improving social security—but they call our proposals a bureaucratic invasion of the rights and liberties of every American.

"They claim to be in favor of housing—but they say our low-cost housing program is a mistake because it does too much for low-income families.

"They make speeches about the American home—but they encourage landlords to lock out their tenants until rent control is repealed.

"They say they are in favor of good wages—but they argue that the minimum wage should be laid down to a starvation level.

"They claim to be in favor of developing our natural resources—but they raise the old cry of 'super-state' against every practical step we propose.

He expressed confidence that, "despite efforts to confuse," the programs he espoused would be enacted.

Union Health Center Dedicated

By ARNOLD BEICHMAN
New York Correspondent for AFL News Service

New York—In the presence of distinguished guests, including high government, medicine and labor, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union dedicated its expanded Union Health Center which will now be able to service more effectively its 250,000 New York members.

AFL President William Green at a luncheon marking the completion of the $2,500,000 expansion program of the ILGWU's health center, said:

"The health and welfare services instituted by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union have made the women's garment industry a model for the entire country."

Others who spoke at the ceremonies were Governor Thomas E. Dewey, Dr. Tobis, Federal Security Administrator Oscar Ewing, and David Dubinsky, ILGWU president.

The expanding program makes the Union Health Center the largest center for diagnosis and ambulatory care in the country. The center has a staff of 150 physicians and includes the part-time physician who serviced the union in a single room 35 years ago.

A major statement of policy on health insurance was made by Mr. Ewing who derided the attacks on the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill by the American Medical Association and Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, as "unauthorized propaganda."

"It is evident that the lines of battle are drawn," said Mr. Ewing, "and the same forces which fought so consistently the whole principle of extension of social legislation are now being marshalled against this Truman program.

"I do not believe these forces will succeed in their efforts to obstruct or stem the tide of social progress. Over a period of years the American people have developed a tremendous momentum throughout the country. It has now reached overwhelming proportions.

"The plain people of this nation want national health insurance. They need it and they intend to have it."

President Green led off with a statement that since 1933 the American Federation of Labor has "pressed for the adoption of a national system of health insurance."

"We have no desire to 'socialize' the practice of medicine, but we feel that it is entirely possible to spread the risk of cost of illness by application of the insurance principle so that no worker need live under the constant fear of disastrously high doctors' and hospital bills.

"The great desire of the American people today is for real security. The adoption of an effective federal health insurance program will go far toward the realization of that goal.

"Such a federal program can well be supplemented by voluntary plans and trade union welfare and health programs. The labor movement, eager to serve the wage earners and their consecutive and social capacity, will continue to do its part for the public good."

The employer-financed Union Health Center last year provided free medical, dental and hospital care and services through clinics, diagnostic and consultation services and special departments.

Picket Signs Now Identify Chicago Newspaper Scabs

By Chicago Correspondent for AFL Weekly News Service

Chicago—Identification of strikebreaking typists by name and address on picket signs was ordered by Typists Union No. 1 in the Typographical Union's strike against the major Chicago daily newspapers.

Since the printers struck on Nov. 24, 1947, the papers have continued to publish, substituting strikebreaking typists for printers. Many of the stories in flush columns on varityype machines. The stories are then pasted up on page proofs, and the pictures of the pages are then photographed and printed.

Three weeks ago, the union began experimenting with a picketing technique beamed directly at the varityipists who were scabbing on the union printers. Through legwork on a small scale, it will be extended to Tribune, biggest and richest of the 5 struck papers.

Varityping machines are installed in front of the Tribune Tower one floor souring saw their names and addresses in large type on the picket signs carried by the striking printers with all.

A husband who saw his wife's name on a picket sign asked the union to remove it because it would be embarrassing to the neighbor her out. They would. He did.

Several varityping left outright. Several others reported themselves ill, and did not show up for work.

The Tribune, which set-styled champion of freedom of the press, complained bitterly when the union turned on the pressure with a picketing and card-passing campaign near the homes of a few who had crossed it.

Still going strong after 15 months, the printers' strike is probably the longest continuous strike of its kind in the history of the country, although the same local union's strike against the huge Donnelly printing plant in Chicago in 1908, went on for 3 years.

Issues of wages and jurisdiction are still the principal obstacles to settlement of the strike against the dailies.

AFL BACKS SEAFARERS ON ECA CARGO BILL

New York City—The Seafarers International Union, AFL, Atlantic and Gulf District, announced that it had received the full support of the American Federation of Labor in its fight for passage of the Bland-Magnuson Bill without amendment. The support, according to SIU officials here, was received in a telegram from William Green, president of the AFL.

The measure was introduced in the House by Chairman Schuyler Otis Bland of the House Merchant Marine Committee and in the Senate by Senator Warren G. Magnuson. It would plug loopholes in present legislation calling for American flag participation in the carrying of foreign aid cargoes to the extent of 50 percent.

Senate Group Drafts Final Bill After Hearings End

Washington, D. C.—With public hearings over, the Senate Labor Committee is now hammering out the final draft of the bill to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act and expects to report it out to the Senate within two weeks for debate and action.

It is considered certain that the majority forces on the committee will approve a repeal measure satisfactory to organized labor. Only minor amendments to the administration supported Thomas bill, which was introduced by the American Federation of Labor, are expected to be made.

However, at least three minority members of the committee were reported working on substitute bills which merely "modify" the Taft-Hartley Act instead of repealing it. Senators Taft, Ives and Morse—all Republicans—are reported framing the bitter floor fights in the Senate to have that body adopt their proposals instead of the committee bill. Efforts to date are being made by these three Senators to agree to a single substitute bill.

If that happens, there is considerable danger of a coalition between Republicans and anti-labor Democrats in support of the Taft-Hartley Act.

AFL President William Green, Vice President George Harrison and other labor leaders were preparing to undertake a vigorous campaign to mobilize renewed public support for outright repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act.

President Truman, himself, in his Jackson Day Address, declared that he might "go to the people all over again" and take his case directly to the people. He made the last campaign, if Congress attempts to thwart his campaign pledges and platform pledges for repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act and other measures of liberal social and economic legislation.

Meanwhile, it appeared likely that a Southern filibuster against the administration's anti-filibuster rule for the Senate might crop up and delay all legislative action in Congress.

Labor awaited hearings on the final testimony submitted to the Senate by the Committee on the Thomas bill, even though industry spokesmen had the first word of the hearings.

At the conclusion of statements presented by representatives of the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce, Senator Morse (Rep., Oregon) charged industry with "un-Christian attitude" toward labor and refusing to make such in regard to legislation which would give the workers a fair wage. The charge, coming from an independent Republican Senator who went on Taft-Hartley repeal differ in many respects with the views of labor, is not new, but a devastating crisp into the face of industry by a friend in the industry witnesses.

The most potent effective witnesses for T-H repeal was Gerhard Van Arkel, former general counsel for the National Labor Relations Board, whose testimony was a severe legal indictment of the Taft-Hartley Act. Instead of collective bargaining, the Taft-Hartley Act "positively discourages it," he said. He charged that many employers have been forced to circumvent the workshop ban in the law in order to keep their unions alive. Based on the job, because union men will refuse to work where non-union men are, the law places a compulsion upon employers to hire non-union men, he said.

Stanley W. Glyer, president of the International Union of Technical Engineers, Architects and Draftsmen (AFL), testified that the unions groups who wish to weaken and disrupt unions of professional employes were "given aid and comfort by the Taft-Hartley Act" and the passage of the law and enactment of the Wagner Act.

Calm but devastating attacks against the Taft-Hartley Act were launched by William Leiserson, former member of the National Labor Relations Board, and Prof. Nathan P. Feinsinger, both recognized experts in labor-management relations. Both urged repeal of the law for throttling collective bargaining and saying it "discriminates" against management to work together constructively on a long-range cooperative basis.

RETAIL CLERKS GET RAISE IN CHICAGO CHAIN STORES

Chicago.—Food clerks of America's second largest metropolitan area—Chicago and suburban cities—have had more than a million dollars added to their annual wages.

The increase is the result of a new contract jointly negotiated by the Chicago Council of Retail Clerks, AFL, and other local unions of the Retail Clerks International Association, with the Kroger Company, Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, National Tea Company and independent grocers.

The industry-wide pact covers some 6,500 grocery clerks—including members in Gary and Hammond, Ind. —and carries a union security provision and a boost in wage rates of $3 to $5 more per week.